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INFO RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 7845
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 7569
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1280
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 8691
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9342
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2494

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TAGS: [TBIO](#) [KFLU](#) [KSCA](#) [PREL](#) [WHO](#) [BG](#)
SUBJECT: AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE

¶1. Post's Avian Influenza Working Group met Sept. 20 to introduce and orient new members Dr. John Christensen (RMO) and Calvin Levo (FMO) and to receive updates from sections.

¶2. FMO expressed a desire to explore increasing Post's cash-on-hand supply as part of pandemic and general emergency preparations. Based on currency devaluation of the BD Taka and general convertibility/acceptability of the US dollar, this would be in US currency.

¶3. RMO indicated Post will be receiving pneumonia vaccine soon. Since pneumonia is the principle side effect that has the highest mortality rate of influenza generally, the RMO recommends all possible personnel get vaccinated. RMO announced that their Flu Surveillance Program has had its first candidate who met the following criteria: over 18 years of age, flu symptoms and temperature over 100.5F in the past week, and consent to participate. Samples were collected and sent away for testing, with negative result for H5N1 strain influenza. RMO also announced that Avian Influenza DVDs from MED had been widely distributed to all sections at Post, and arrangements had been made to show it to interested FSNs who don't have access to TV/DVD players otherwise.

¶4. CDC representative reported that \$1.5 million has been received for installing a true level 3 bio-containment facility at the International Center for Dysentery and Diarrhea Research) Bangladesh (ICDDR-B) . ICDDR-B is now working with specialty contractors from Singapore to move forward with the work. He also informed the group of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that is in the approval stages between ICDDR-B and the BDG Dept. of Livestock concerning exact procedures ICDDR-B will follow for animal surveillance and how those procedures will integrate with BDG efforts. The MoU specifies that while results will be first released to the BDG, they must also subsequently be released to CDC and WHO. Finally, he also reported that the BDG Ministry of Health has received a \$375,000 grant to increase its capabilities in human surveillance.
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